

Early days in the Chippewa Valley

C. A. Bundy.

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How I Came to Settle in Dunn County, Wisconsin

In the month of September, in the year 1856, while on a visit to my two paternal aunts who had migrated from the family nest in Oxford, Chenango county, New York, to Toronto, in Clinton county, Iowa, where I found them, I first met Fred Church. He had then just married my cousin, Maria Louisa Noble, daughter of one of the aunts whom I was visiting. I had just been admitted to the bar in New York and was looking for an eligible site for a law office in the West, where I could "grow up with the country," as the saying was. Mr. Church had no profession, but he was an ambitious young man of fine natural abilities and he was also looking about for a business location. We soon found each other peculiarly congenial, and after a short acquaintance, agreed upon a trip by boat up the Mississippi river, with no very definite destination that I now remember. Our first stopping place proved to be Clinton, Iowa, where, much to our surprise, we found on a little frame building a few feet back from the river bank, (there were no piers then), a sign reading "Chapman & Thorp, Bankers and Brokers." We had both of us known Chapman & Thorp as the leading merchants in Oxford, and had a boy's acquaintance with both. So we ventured in and found Mr. Joseph G. Thorp. Introducing ourselves as Oxford boys, we had no difficulty in awakening Mr. Thorp's kindly interest. He asked us where we were going, and since

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neither of us knew much about that, he said, "Well boys, let me give you some good advice. Mr. Chapman and I have been buying some mill property on the Chippewa river in Wisconsin and a new town has just been laid out. There is an opening for you; go up and see for yourselves." Here was an "opening" seemingly large enough for us both, (a consideration seldom lost sight of by young men planning a career), and we jumped at it. Resuming our journey on the river we reached Reed's Landing soon after sundown on the 17th of September. We were to ferry across the river to the Wisconsin side and there take the stage from Pepin to Eau Claire. There had been a severe storm that day, and the steamboat Alhambra lay just in sight on the shore of Lake Pepin a wreck; and the river at Reed's Landing was so rough that we found it difficult to induce the ferryman to undertake to cross us that night, and this was necessary to enable us to catch the next morning's stage up the Chippewa. However, by adding a dollar to the usual fare we 4 prevailed on him to make the venture. We crossed in safety but reached shore nearly a mile below the usual landing; that, however, was a small matter to us who were hot on the trail for that "opening" in Eau Claire. We found hospitable lodging somewhere on the beach and were on time at the stage office in Pepin the next morning. That evening we alighted at Eau Claire, having made forty miles. We passed less than twenty houses on the road. Durand had not then been dreamed of, and H. Clay Williams (afterwards a distinguished lawyer in Eau Claire), was keeping a little store at Bear Creek (I think near the site of the Durand of this day), and that was the only settlement so far as I can remember on that side of the river. On the way we stopped at and passed through Waubeek, consisting of a single dwelling house from which on a clear day two farm houses could be seen up the road towards Dunnville. An old gentleman, whose name is not now remembered, but who was afterwards known to me as a justice of the peace, lived in one of them, and Mr. Gardiner lived in the other. The latter was a farmer who was said to have raised enough sod potatoes the first year of his settlement to pay for his quarter section of land. He sold his potatoes to Carson & Eaton of Eau Galle for \$1 a bushel.

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At Eau Claire we put up at the only hotel in the place, a two-story frame building, not yet plastered or ceiled, but as mine host tried to make up in cordiality what he lacked in shelter for his guests, our first night in Eau Claire did not bring on chills. The following morning we sallied out early and eager to see the town. The first man we met was a Mr. Seely on his way to the real estate office of Mr. Wm. H. Gleason; from him we received a picturesque description of the town as it was, and was to be, from the purchase of a section of school land by Gleason and "Dick" Wilson, to its then state of completeness, and the great things in store for it to be realized in the near future, including a trunk railroad from Madison to St. Paul and the improvement of the water power at the Dells. Eau Claire at that moment could hardly be called a metropolis. It consisted of the hotel and real estate office already mentioned, Gage & Reed's saw mill, and the ferry boat, all enveloped in a halo of great expectations. I believe that Mr. Adin Randall had started some building operations a little below and on the west side of the Chippewa, but he was thought to be too far from the center of the city to sell any lots. It was only a matter of a few days before we were introduced to Mr. Wm. H. Gleason, Mr. Richard Wilson, Mr. Charlie Davis, and Captain Victor Whipple, all important men and pioneers whom we were to meet many times thereafter.

Probably no more fitting opportunity will offer than this to pay a passing tribute to one of the most remarkable men I have ever known. Wm. H. Gleason came to Eau Claire in 1855 or 1856, after being two years sergeant-at-arms on the house side of the Wisconsin legislature. There he conceived the project of laying out a town at the confluence of the Chippewa and Eau Claire rivers, and to that end obtained title to section of school land, (Mr. Wilson was interested with him). The peculiar trait which differentiated Gleason from most men of remarkable mental activity was that he no sooner saw a conception of his own under way than he seemed to lose interest in it and flit to a new one. In his imagination he saw Eau Claire then as we see it today, but he had no time to wait for others to see it, so instead of sitting down to watch the new city grow he turned his attention to banking.

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Between the years 1857 and 1867 he organized bank after bank in different states, of course not wholly for benevolent reasons, but in great part to satisfy an irresistible craving for new sensations. When the Civil war broke out, he with one Hunt became a purveyor or wholesale dealer in sutler's supplies for the army. After the war he moved south to the east coast of Florida and founded a city that he called Eau Galle; he got an appropriation through the Florida legislature sufficient to build an agricultural college, was elected lieutenant governor of the state and offered more bills in the legislature for internal improvements than any other man living or dead had ever done before. He spent a month with me in Washington in the year 1867, and during that time he drafted a dozen or more bills to be presented to the Florida legislature for enactment into laws, all of them deepening some river, draining some swamp, or digging some canal. After a long acquaintance with Governor Gleason, I can say that his many schemes were always laudable and the methods he employed were not materially different from those followed by all exploiters. But he was multifarious to the last degree; his head seemed to be an inexhaustible storage battery of new ideas which he never tired of imparting to others. The last word I heard of him, however, was that he was suffering from paralysis of the vocal organs and nearing the end of a strenuous and restless life.

Among the young men of that early day whose acquaintance has furnished me pleasant recollections never to be forgotten, was Gilbert E. Porter of Eau Claire.

I made his acquaintance in the fall of 1856 and during the winter following was frequently in his company. He came to Eau Claire as the agent for Chapman & Thorp and remained with them in full charge of their business until he was succeeded by Mr. Calahan. Mr. Porter liked a good cigar and no one of my acquaintance made out of a sociable smoke than he.

I shall never forget the pleasure he manifested in reciting the lines written by a Buffalo (N. Y.) editor on receipt of a box of cigars. They run as follows:

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I thank you for the present; it seems you know my falling, A popular disorder with which
myriads are ailing. I own the weakness frankly, if weakness it may be, Though thousands
of my fellow men are just as weak as me.

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In the stillness of my chamber when the moon is at her height And the earth is wrapped
in darkness 'neath the shadows of the night, When no sound the soft air pierces save the
whistle of the cars, I'll think of thee and bless thee as I smoke these same cigars.

May your days be long and peaceful and their evenings fair as June, May their end be
sweet and pleasant as the ending of a tune, May our friendship, pray indulge me in a trifle
of a joke, Unlike your gift, be permanent and never end in smoke.

Returning to the "opening" at Eau Claire. The first event of consequence to us both
(Church and myself) was the fall election in which a senator from that district was to be
chosen for the state legislature. It appears at this distance of time not a little curious that
a month's residence in a state should be thought to be a qualification for any participation
in a political campaign, but we were all alike ("tenderfeet"), and what was a few days'
residence more or less mong friends? My recollection now is that there never had been
but one senator elected from that district and that was Benjamin Allen, a Democrat
residing at Pepin, or Hudson, I do not remember which. The district was thought to
be Democratic and a nomination equivalent to an election. Mr. McNalley, a lawyer at
Chippewa Falls, and a Democrat, was thought to have a sure thing for the nomination, and
consequently an easy walk over to the office, but there proved to be a cloud on his horizon
that he had failed to notice. The senatorial district consisted of Pierce, St. Croix, Polk,
Dunn, Clark, Eau Claire, and Chippewa counties; and all the territory to the northwest to
Lake Superior, which latter was, I think, included in Douglas county, with county seat at
Superior city. ("The Zenith City of the unsalted sea" was then unborn). The project of a
railroad across the Chippewa Valley towards the northwest had just begun to interest the
settlers along the route, and live men everywhere were beginning to take notice. It was,

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of course understood that McNalley would naturally favor the Chippewa Falls route, and the Eau Claire men were unanimously for the Eau Claire route. One day Mr. Gleason came to me with a paper in his hand and asked if I would accept a proxy for a Mr. O'Neil of Neillsville, Clark county, and attend the nominating convention a few days later at Hudson. Not seeing any objection to that, I readily consented. Two days afterwards, a party of five besides the driver, in a two-horse lumber wagon started on the road to Knapp, Stout & Company's mill on the Red Cedar river, where we were to stop over night and hold a conference with the managers of that concern upon the "political crisis," and the next day go on to the convention. Our party consisted of Capt. Victor Whipple, Wm. H. Gleason, Richard Wilson, Charlie Davis and C. S. Bundy, besides the driver. Reaching what is now Menomonie in due time we introduced each other to Capt. Wm. Wilson, the manager, Andrew Tainter, a member of the firm, and S. B. French, the book-keeper, and others whom we met in the store of the company. It didn't take many minutes to explain the nature of the crisis and the importance of prompt action on our part to avert the danger threatening at Chippewa Falls. Less than an hour's consideration served to settle all the difficulties in sight. This was the program,—a people's mass meeting was to be held at the dining hall that evening at eight o'clock to agree upon a candidate whom we delegates were to bring out and support, we to furnish the speakers and Knapp, Stout and Company to furnish the audience for the meeting. This mass meeting came off pursuant to a notice dictated by Mr. Gleason, reduced to writing by Mr. French, and posted on the store door. (This notice was prepared for use in the canvass to follow). Suitable resolutions were also adopted and the delegates duly instructed to use all lawful and proper means to nominate and elect Hon. Wm. Wilson of Dunn County to the office of state senator for the Twenty-eighth district of Wisconsin. This preliminary settled to our liking, the delegates started out bright and early the next morning for the trip through the "big woods." There was a bridle path through the woods over which the mail was carried on horseback, and that path served for a snow path for sleighs in winter, but no wheeled vehicle had ever gone through that thirty miles known as the "big woods" on its own wheels. Equipped as we were, however, with an ax and saw, we encountered only small difficulties which were

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easily removed and so we made the trip without notable incident. About noon we arrived at Holmann's the only house in the whole distance, and there dined on bear steak, of which we were duly apprised as we drove up to the door by the fresh pelts nailed to the trunks of forest trees surrounding the house.

MENOMONIE IN 1856

I turn now for a moment to speak of Menomonie as i saw it on this trip for the first time, in the month of October, 1856. On approaching Menomonie from the East, the first objects to attract notice were the mill pond, the log boom, and the ferry which furnished the only means of crossing to the mill and other buildings around it. It was a rope ferry and I think it was propelled by the current of the river and a carrier pulley. The bridge, which I think stands very near the site of the ferry crossing, was not built for more than a year afterwards. The Company's store, a large two-story building of modern appearance, stood facing the ferry landing, and perhaps fifty yards distant. The mill, a little longer distance down the stream, was what is known as a "gang mill," that is, it had several saw blades fixed in a frame the thickness of a board apart, so that the carriage which moved the logs forward against the saws made but a single trip to saw th whole log into boards. Whether the mill had more than one gang of saws I cannot now remember; I know, however, that it had one or more circular saws for I saw one in motion just in time to avoid sitting on it on a certain occasion. The mill was a long building, having every appearance in itself and its surroundings of being what it 8 was reputed to be, the center of a very large and profitable industry. The kitchen was a little above the mill and the sleeping shanty below.

Going back to the store and turning to the west, the traveler would see Bullard's Tavern, a story and a half frame building, standing a little way off at the top of hill near the entrance to the "big woods" going west. The tavern was the property of the company but was always spoken of a "Bullard's."

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Lorenzo Bullard was an ideal boniface, admirably adapted to his time and place, and his wife was his match in equipment for every duty of the landlady. Both were always ready to welcome the coming and speed the parting guest. They sold no liquor; and no coffee or mince pie that Mrs. Bullard ever made was known to leave a bad taste in the mouth. I took my meals with them for more than a year, and my recollections are strong and clear on that subject. Mr. Bullard held the office of justice of the peace one year or more, while I held the office of district attorney. He was a faithful and useful magistrate.

Now, leaving my old friend Bullard, let us go back to the store. Directly back of the building stood Mr. Andrew Tainter's house, where his six children by his first wife were born. It was a two-story unpainted frame, probably the first he ever occupied, and in every way suited to his circumstances during the first years' residence in that Indian county. I have a pleasant recollection of him which seems worth telling along with these desultory reminiscences. He asked me one day to ride up to Rice Lake with him; we returned about seven o'clock p.m., cold and hungry, and found that his wife had cooked a mess of brook trout for his supper. They came on the table steaming hot in an ordinary baking tin, "full pressed down, shaken together and running over." Nothing but speckled trout and griddle cakes. But what a supper it was! It would take the vocabulary of a Roosevelt to describe it.

Still standing at the store, and turning to the southeast, just across the street was a small cluster of story and half houses presenting the appearance of having been built at different times, but all united into one house and enclosed by a fence. This was the residence of the manager, Captain Wilson. There was nothing in the external appearance of this house to distinguish it from the poorest house I have mentioned unless the fence around it should be thought to be so. I have unintentionally omitted Mr. French's house, which I think stood just north of the store, but my recollection is too dim to recall in any manner how it looked. These are all the buildings that I now remember. I have a very faint recollection of the old mill on Wilson creek, but I feel sure it was not remodeled and turned into a shingle and planing mill until the big mill was rebuilt after the fire, probably in the year 1858.

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Now resuming our journey. Once through the big woods the balance of our way to the convention was easy, and there good fortune awaited us. Our ticket was nominated: Wm. Wilson of Dunn county for senate, and Dr. O. T. Maxon of Pierce for the house. But 9 it soon dawned upon us that a nomination is unimportant unless ratified at the polls; and right there was our difficulty. The district was thought to be Democratic and our candidate, so far as he had any politics was known to be an abolitionist. Now how could we land our fish with that bait? A conference was held at which it was decided that Gleason should make the trip to Superior, Whipple, Wilson and Davis should canvass the Chippewa valley, and I was to remain in the St. Croix country and do what I could in Pierce, St. Croix and Polk county. The election was only three weeks off. The men I remember to have seen on my canvass were Oliver Gibbs and Dr. Maxon in Prescott, H. L. Humphrey (afterwards Judge Humphrey) and a Mr. Hughes in Hudson, Mr. Cox and Mr. Lute Taylor in River Falls, and one man only, (I think his name was Samuels), at St. Croix Falls, Polk county. We all did nobly; but the details unfortunately are now lost. It would be especially interesting to know the particulars of Gleason's canvass, but that is now impossible. All that is known about it is that he made the trip (some 200 miles) on foot with an Indian guide; he was detained in the lake country several weeks after election by inclement weather, and when he reached Madison with the returns they showed "800 majority for Wilson." That settled it; our ticket was triumphantly elected.

THE "OPENING" CHANGED FROM EAU CLAIRE TO DUNNVILLE

The election over, I returned to Menomonie Mills with the company's horse that I had been riding, and there met Captain Wilson, as he was called. He was naturally gratified at his success and looked upon me as one of the instruments employed to attain it. He invited me to his table and in other ways manifested his interest. Conversation soon turned to the question of what were my plans for settlement in the new country; and learning from me that they were not yet fixed, he remarked that Dunnville, the county seat of Dunn county, only thirteen miles down the river, was just the place for a young lawyer, and went

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on to recount the inducements already apparent as well as others in the near prospect substantially as follows: A court house was nearing completion and would be ready for occupancy in a few days. That Dunnville was a fine site for a mill, the river only needing a dam at that point to make it available as a great water power. Steamboats could run up the river out of the Chippewa to Dunnville Landing. That Knapp, Stout and Company contemplated building a large mill on the site to the full capacity of the water power. In short that, although very little had been done in the way of improvements so far, its natural advantages were such that almost anything was possible there. These were forecasts merely. The only thing he pledged the company to do was to build me a law office and give me all the time I required to pay for it, and this the company did. I accepted the proposition with thanks and thenceforth for over four years became a resident of Dunn county. That winter, while Captain Wilson was in attendance upon his legislative duties in Madison, the company suffered a heavy loss by fire in the burning of the mill at Menomonie.

After the many changes time has wrought in the sixty years since that disaster, it is difficult to estimate the loss it entailed not only upon the owners, but also upon the inhabitants for sixty miles up and down the river from the mill. Its immediate effect upon the prospects of Dunnville was dispiriting. The following spring I was joined by my brother, the late Judge E. B. Bundy of Menomonie, and without further ado we bought a tin sign and nailed it to the new office on the left and hand side of the door, reading "C. S. and E. b. Bundy, Attorneys at Law."

The remaining two years of my life in Dunnville were not crowded with either law business or other secular vocations. We had one suit entitled "McCain vs. McCain," which we won, but not satisfied with that my brother caned the lawyer on the other side and that act so ingratiated him with the gentle sex that he was able to marry one of the fairest maids in the whole neighborhood. She has survived her husband, to be a faithful and devoted mother of her six sons and three daughters, all living and all as fond and proud of her as she is of them. Our firm drew the contract, including the plans and specifications, between Mr.

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Downs and Knapp, Stout & Co., for rebuilding the mills, and that reminds me of Mr. B. B. Downs, a mechanic and millwright of rare skill in this calling and a very useful—almost indispensable—man in that new country. He built and at one time (I think) owned and operated the mill a Downsville and that place was named for him.

Among the notable men in and about Dunnville at that time were Amos Colburn, first sheriff of Dunn county, and owner and landlord of the first hotel built there. David Heller and his sons, Dr. Walter Crocker, his brother-in-law. Charles, Thomas and Robert McCauley, brothers, who in after years became respectively sheriff and county judge of Dunn county and members of the legislature, Squire J. D. Fiske, Squire William Tice, who was drowned in the Chippewa river, Frank Breck and Frederick Church (already mentioned), who afterwards removed to Menomonie and was elected to the assembly from that place, and died in Madison during his term of office; Samuel B. Washburn, one of the famous Washburn brothers, John McCauley and his son, Hugh, Dr. J. R. Greene, the county clerk, Edward Lane, the blacksmith, George Porter, the fiddler, R. R. Root, wagon maker, William Cady, county judge, J. B. McKahan, clerk, John Cavanaugh, storekeeper and postmaster, Milton Culbertson, blacksmith, J. J. Cavanaugh, pilot, and Russell Culbertson, carpenter and builder.

HOW DUNNVILLE CAME TO LOSE THE COUNTY SEAT

Two lawyers of prominence in this part of the state were residents of Pepin and they complained of the distance they had to travel to the county seat and that led to a movement to change it 11 from Dunnville to Pepin; and finding that impracticable, they applied to the legislature to set off a new county from the southern part of Dunn with a county seat at Pepin. In spite of a strong opposition in Dunn county, the bill passed and Pepin county was created. The effect of this division of Dunn county was to leave Dunnville (which before was central) near the southern boundary line. Immediately there was a strong and active party advocating the removal of the county seat from Dunnville to Menomonie, which was more central. Although that project met considerable opposition

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and seemed at one time likely to be defeated, a new and unexpected event occurred which completely changed the situation, to-wit: the court house caught fire and was burned to the ground. Whether that fire was accidental or criminal in its origin has never been satisfactory ascertained. Only one thing now is known about it. It served to cancel the last claim of Dunnville for the retention of the county seat. The first plan after Pepin was organized as a county, I believe, was to move the county seat to Eau Galle. Then a compromise was effected, and a law passed making the contest between Dunnville and Menomonie. At any rate the county seat was changed to Menomonie, and C. S. and E. B. Bundy moved their law office to the new site. Meanwhile and in anticipation of the change, Knapp, Stout & Company had laid out the city of Menomonie and put the lots on the market. One of the first thoughts of the proprietors of the new town was the importance of a newspaper devoted to its interests. Captain Wilson, who was the "whole thing" in those days, knew two men, brothers I think, living at or near Reed's Landing, both of whom were practical printers. They could do typographical and mechanical work but neither one would undertake to write the editorials, so the establishment of a newspaper depended upon finding an editor.

At this juncture the Captain turned to me saying, "Bundy, can't you edit a newspaper?" I replied that I knew no reason why I could not, and that was the naked truth, for I had never written a word for publication in my life, and had never been inside of a printing office that I remember. I had seen pictures of the Franklin printing press in the school books, and I wrote a fair hand; these acquirements constituted my equipment for editor of "The Dunn County Lumberman," as the newspaper was to be christened. Only a few days sufficed to procure a press and complete printing office outfit, including a sufficient stock of paper. How this material found its way from Reed's Landing I do not remember, but have an impression that it went by steamboat to Dunnville, (Captain Tainter had about that time bought a steamboat), and from thence by wagon to Menomonie. My recollection is that I was told the whole newspaper outfit cost something near \$1,000. A printing office was fitted up in the second story of an old frame building, standing near the river just south of

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Captain Wilson's residence, with access to it by an outside stairway at the south end of the building. The first issue of that paper was an event, if not a miracle of style and matter. Fortunately it has not been preserved 12 so far as I know. I was present at the birth; did whatever I could to assist the printers at the press work and took part also in the folding, wrapping and addressing of the papers. After the first issue the paper came out weekly during the first year, until I left Menomonie for the war, when I turned it over to my brother, E. B., but I wrote several letters for it from camp near Washington. That was the beginning of The Dunn County News, the oldest weekly paper in the Chippewa valley.

COMPANY K, 5TH WISCONSIN VOLUNTEER INFANTRY

It will be remembered that President Lincoln issued his first call for 75,000 volunteers on the 15th day of April, 1861, three days after the firing on Fort Sumter. From the day that call reached Menomonie until a company of 100 men were enrolled ready to be mustered into the service there was no rest or peace in that part of Dunn county.

About two months thereafter (date not now remembered) they were mustered into the United States service at Madison, Wis., where they had been encamped waiting their turn, as Company K, 5th Wisconsin Infantry Volunteers, with William Evans, captain; Charles Baird, first lieutenant; Theodore S. West, second lieutenant; and Charles S. Bundy, first sergeant or orderly sergeant, as it was commonly known. So that Company K was among the first offerings of the loyal state of Wisconsin for the defense of the flag. The 5th Regiment formed a part of the Army of the Potomac and served as such during the war.

Since Chippewa Falls was in those early days considered to be within the circle of our interest and activities, a few words relating to the infancy of that now important town cannot be out of place. All the mill towns in the Northwest were essentially alike in their beginnings. Each was dominated at first by some one man of exceptional energy and force of character. In Chippewa Falls it was H. S. Allen (and Thaddeus C. Pound was his clerk and bookkeeper.) His sphere of influence, like all other proprietors of lumber

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mills, extended from the logging camps in the pineries to the market towns on the lower Mississippi. They were necessarily autocrafts because they owned and operated all the means of transportation and all the supplies for the subsistence of man and beast. If they were potentially despotic, theirs was a benevolent despotism, and was always relieved and ameliorated by a tendency towards lavish hospitality.

The following are the mills of that day in the Chippewa valley as far as my memory serves me, i. e., Chippewa Falls Mill, owned by H. S. Allen; Eau Claire mill, owned by Gage & Reed and afterwards by Chippewa & Thorp; Menomonie Mills, owned by Knapp, Stout & Co; Eau Galle mill, owned by Carson & Eaton, and Gilbert's mill, owned by Oliver Gilbert. (This last was sometimes called Gilbert's old mill, and was located a mile or so below Knapp, Stout & Company's mill).

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FIFTY-THREE YEARS AFTER

In the summer of 1909 I revisited the places I have so imperfectly sketched and marked the changes which fifty years had wrought.

I found that constant and never-falling water power, the Red Cedar river, had worked out a wondrous change under the guidance of far-sighted men. After transforming the wilderness about it into populous cities, thriving 'villages and productive farms, it had furnished the markets of the Mississippi valley sufficient lumber to build whole cities, and then when the pineries were sawed out, it turned under similar guidance, with unspent energy to the generation of electricity to supply light, heat, and power to surrounding towns.

I said to myself this is indeed a working model of the conservation of natural resources not surpassed anywhere within the circle of my observation.

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Turning then to the valley of the Chippewa proper, I found in place of the old Indian trail two trunk lines crossing it and traversing the prairies on either side and abundant evidences of profitable farming where fifty years before I could see but little promise of fertility or thrift.

Eau Claire had made good the sanguine prophesy of its adventurous projector, and Chippewa Falls was only second to Eau Claire in its evidence of wealth and prosperity.

SOCIETY NEWS

I am indebted to a lady friend whose recollection of names and social events is better than mine, who has written the following chapter on the "Society News" of that early day:

"The first event I recall was a large dancing party given as an opening of the hall, afterwards known as Knapp, Stout & Company's store, on the other side of the river from Dunnville on the 4th of July, 1857. There was a large company from all over the county.

The next was the wedding of Miss Henrietta Cavanaugh to Mr. William P. Lewton of Winona, Minn. It was the first wedding celebrated in a social way. They were married in the parlor of the bride's father by the Reverend James Gurley of Pepin with Episcopal church services.

There was a large company present. From Menomonie Thomas B. Wilson and bride, who had been married a short time before, Miss E. T. Wilson, her brother Martin Wilson, the Misses McKahan, Messrs. Louis Newsom, and Willis Downs. From Eau Galle, Mr. and Mrs. William Carson, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Smith, Charles Smith and his sister Mrs. Wright, Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Downs and Miss Mary Downs. The bride was dressed in white Swiss, the groom in conventional black. Hugh Macauley was groomsman and his cousin, Miss Reubena Macauley, was bridesmaid. After congratulations all adjourned to the hotel where

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Charles Curtis and wife 14 served a fine supper, thence all went into the hall upstairs and danced till morning.

The next social event which I recollect was the Calico ball January 8, 1858, given in commemoration of the Battle of New Orleans, fought and won by General Jackson January 8, 1815. As he fought behind bales of cotton the ladies who had helped to plan the ball decided and agreed to all wear calico gowns, which was announced on the invitations sent out. There was a very large company in attendance, and with the exception of the ladies from Eau Claire, all were, as had been agreed, dressed in cotton. For a time it threw a damper on the spirits of those dressed in accordance with the agreement to find others dressed in silk and looking so fine. But when the latter came forward and made their apologies, declaring they had not understood the arrangement and were truly sorry for the mistake, good feeling was restored and all had a fine time.

The society people of Menomonie, Eau Galle, Durand and Dunnville were all out. From Eau Claire, I remember Pitt Bartlett, A. Meggett, G. E. Porter of the press, Miss Tewksbury and the Thorps; others have forgotten. After the dance and supper there were toasts. Pitt Bartlett made a lengthy speech, C. S. Bundy and many others also spoke. (Judge E. B. Bundy, I think, was not there.)

The next social event of importance was the wedding of Mrs. Wright of Eau Galle to H. Clay Williams of Durand, which brought together a very large gathering of about the same people who were out on the former occasions. This wedding occurred in the spring of the same year (1858). They were married at the house of Mrs. William Carson, the bride's sister. A fine supper and dancing were the pastimes of the evening. I think it was the same winter we had a singing school and debating club. I remember the debate that was held in Mrs. Colburn's dining room in the old house. The question that was up that evening was "Resolved, that the Indians of the United States have suffered more from the hands of the Whites than the Negroes." I think that either C. S. or E. B. Bundy on the negative and Robert Macauley on the affirmative. During the evening a band of Sioux who were on

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the warpath and who came up here to scalp the Chippewas were in and listened to the debate. I remember how frightened my mother and we girls were.

In the summer of 1860 Mary Downs was married to Thompson Heller of Menomonie. Mr. Downs and family had moved from near Eau Galle to the place that was afterwards called Downsville, where the wedding was held in the afternoon. A large number of friends were present. After a fine dinner the company left for Dunnville, where the bridal party took the steamboat for a wedding trip. I think it was the winter of 1860 that Oliver Goldsmith's comedy, "She Stoops to Conquer," was played in the hall of Dunnville Hotel. I remember the names about all who took part. They are as follows: Robert Macauley was Mr. Hardcastle; 15 Mrs. Root was Mrs. Hardcastle; Mr. Russell K. Root was Sir Charles Marlow; E. B. Bundy was young Charles Marlow; John J. Cavanaugh was son of Mr. Hardcastle; Miller Culbertson was George Hastings; Mrs. Lane was Miss Kate hardcastle whom young Marlow was to marry; Miss Reubena Macauley was Miss Constance Neville, an heiress and niece of Mrs. Hardcastle, whom Hastings was to marry. I remember that "The Dunn County Lumberman" had quite a humorous write-up about the play.

Of all those who took part in that play only Miss Reubena Macauley and Mrs. Lane are left, the former the widow of Judge E. B. Bundy living at Menomonie, their old home, and the latter still well and active overseeing her large fruit orchard in Clifton, Colorado, where she resided. She is the second time a widow, by name Mrs. Martha Hall, and is now 80 years old.

The following were familiar names and faces to me in my girlhood days: Miss Nellie Kiskaden, who taught the Dunnville school, and was assistant editor of the little paper gotten out by the Literary and Debating society. She was married in the spring of 1860 to Mr. Charles Kyle. She was a music teacher in Eau Galle before going to Dunnville and was a bright and talented young lady. She and her husband are still living in Menomonie, having retired from their farm several years ago.

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The Misses Martha and Eliza Kyle were very popular young ladies in the county. The former married Thomas Blair, the second sheriff of Dunn county. (Mr. Colburn was the first). Eliza married Captain William Cassidy, who is still living in Wabasha, Minn. Martha and her husband died many years ago.

Miss Emma Evans, (sister of Mrs. Root), a dressmaker, was another nice young lady of Dunnville. Mary Macauley and her cousin, Annette Cavanaugh, young girls at that time, are still living, the former in Portland, Oregon, the widow of Rev. Theodore Lewton, the latter with her husband, George Allen, are living and in good health in Palo Alto, California.

The spring of 1861 was one long to be remembered, so many of the best men of Dunn county enlisting for the war, many never to return. The only thing of a social nature for a time was having small entertainments for the purpose of raising money to help soldiers in the field or their families at home.

The first 4th of July celebration held in Dunn county was in 1862, in Dunnville, in a grove near the school house. William H. Smith of Eau Galle was president of the day, Dr. Crocker the marshal, and E. B. Bundy delivered the oration. After the exercises a good dinner, provided by the women of the village and vicinity, was enjoyed. There was a very large gathering from the towns and countryside nearby, and the celebration was regarded as a success.

The 4th of July, 1863, was celebrated in the city of Menomonie. Captain Wilson was president of the day and Hon. H. L. Humphrey delivered the oration. There was a great crowd and the ladies of Menomonie had provided for a big dinner, but the 16 people who had not made any provision for their dinner forced their way to the tables and ate so ravenously that we who had worked so hard to prepare the delicious food had but little left for ourselves. Many went home hungry. This was the first and last celebration of that kind ever held in Menomonie within my recollection."

BENCH AND BAR

I cannot close this sketch without a paragraph recalling some of the judges and lawyers of the Chippewa valley in those early days. The first judge of the judicial district was named Fuller. He was somewhat advanced in years, but was well preserved both in body and mind.

The lawyers in Pepin, so far as I remember, were Benjamin Allen (heretofore mentioned), Henry D. Barron, afterwards Judge Barron, Frank Clark, who soon changed his residence to Chicago, and his profession to that of a physician, and Solomon S. Burleson, who some time afterward entered the ministry and lived a long and useful life at Wabasha, in the state of Minnesota, and as a missionary among the Indians. He was the referee in the divorce suit of McCain vs. McCain already mentioned. On the prairie below Dunnville lived the Bartlett brothers, E. M. and M. D., who later settled in Eau Claire, where both attained distinction at the bar and are well remembered.

There were several lawyers in Eau Claire during my time, but only four have left any distinct impression in my memory. They are Alexander Meggett, George Meeks and William Pitt Bartlett, the latter still living, a sturdy and vigorous man devoted to his profession, who has never been pushed aside nor overshadowed by younger men; and Theodore Spencer, who died young, and I think in the military service.

Mr. McNalley of Chippewa Falls, heretofore mentioned, has entirely passed from my memory, and I can recall only two more, viz: Hollen Richardson, who attained military distinction as an officer in the Civil war, and Andrew Gregg, Jr., who I think held the office of county judge.

In this sketch I have had occasion to mention four justices of the peace. The office of justice of the peace is everywhere held in honor. Sir Edward Coke, who has been called

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the father of common law, said of it: "The whole Christian world hath not its like if only it be duly executed."